

19. THE OCCURRENCE OF THE HOUSE CROW (*CORVUS
SPLENDENS*) IN PORT BLAIR, SOUTH
ANDAMAN ISLAND

I was in Port Blair, South Andaman, between 18-12-1985 and 1-1-1986, staying at a hotel on Marine Hill. There were between 6-10 House Crows (*Corvus splendens*) resident in and around the premises of the hotel (Bay Island). These House Crows were smaller than the Jungle Crows (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) found on these islands and comparatively very few in number. We only saw them around this hotel and the Megapode's Nest guest house complex, run by the government. The neck region was darker than that of House Crows on the mainland, though the call did not differ from the latter. Along with the resident race

of the Jungle Crow they would constantly harrass an immature Whitebellied Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) over the hotel. We saw them on all the days that we were there.

The House Crow has not been previously recorded on these islands, though Tytler in *Ibis* (1867) stated that they had been introduced for sanitary purposes but does not appear to have thrived or multiplied (Abdulali 1964).

The call of the Jungle Crow of this island is much different from that of the mainland birds'. It is pleasanter and slightly drawn out. The difference is immediately noticeable.

14-7-370 BEGUM BAZAR
HYDERABAD - 500 012,
June 20, 1986.

AASHEESH PITTIE

REFERENCE

ABDULALI, H. (1964): The Birds of the Andamans & Nicobar Islands. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 61(3): 556.

20. OCCURRENCE OF THE ASHY MINIVET (*PERICROCOTUS
DIVARICATUS*) IN MADRAS CITY (SOUTH INDIA)

It was on 9.xii.1984 that I first saw the Ashy Minivet (*Pericrocotus divaricatus*) at the Guindy National Park, Madras. This species was subsequently sighted in the same area on 16.xii.1984 and 26.i.1985. Again, after a lapse of about ten months, these birds were seen on 15.xii.1985 at the Theosophical Society Estates, adjacent to the Adayar river. The birds were heard on 19.i.1986 at the same locality. Thereafter, they were noticed on two other instances on 23.ii.1986 and 22.iii.1986 at the Society Estates.

The Ashy Minivet is quite distinct from the

small Minivet (*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*) — the only other minivet so far recorded from the Madras area. As it is a common species, I am thoroughly familiar with it and its calls. The Ashy Minivet was definitely larger than the small minivet. It was about the size of a Bulbul but considerably slimmer and with a proportionately longer tail. There were no bright colours present on any of the birds — the birds being ashy-grey, black and white. The upper parts were uniform grey (some appeared to have a brownish tinge) and underparts were whitish. The males had a blackish